ANNUAL REPORT 2003–2004

TAKING FLIGHT

Saskatchewan
Health Research
FOUNDATION

Vision

Building a healthy Saskatchewan through health research

Mission

The Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation contributes to a healthy province by funding and promoting excellence in health research, promoting the benefits of health research, and enhancing capacity, including securing funds to support excellent research and researchers.

Mandate

As defined in *The Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation Act (2002)*:

- Encourage and facilitate research in health sciences, the health-related social sciences and other health-related fields of study.
- Assist the Minister of Health to develop a provincial strategy for research into matters associated with the health sciences, the health-related social sciences and other health-related fields of study.
- Provide funding to persons and agencies who are conducting or proposing to conduct research projects that are consistent with the provincial strategy.
- Seek and receive funding from government and non-government sources for the advancement of research.
- Disseminate information to members of health-related professions and to the public respecting the objects of the Foundation, the research that the Foundation supports, the results of that research and conclusions drawn from that research.

104-06801/

The Honourable John T. Nilson, QC
Minister of Health
Legislative Assembly
Regina SK S4S 0B3

Dear Mr. Nilson:

I am pleased to submit, for your consideration, the annual report of the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation for the fiscal period April 1, 2003 to March 31, 2004.

Respectfully submitted,

E. L. Harrison, PhD, MSc, BPT
Chair

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BOARD CHAIR'S MESSAGE

In 2003-04, our first full fiscal year, we focused on building a strong organizational base to support the mandate of the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation (SHRF). Strong leadership from our board members and our well-respected and experienced CEO, June Bold, ensured a successful launch for the new Foundation. Congratulations to June and our capable staff for establishing a new and efficient office while continuing to provide professional and high-quality service to our research community. To my fellow board members, thank you for your dedication to our work and your thoughtful debates about our mission and our priorities. These have been invaluable as we set the Foundation's course.

Carrying on responsibilities from our predecessor, the Health Services Utilization and Research Commission (HSURC), the Foundation truly "hit the ground running." We were committed to ensuring a seamless transition for existing programs and for the individuals and groups funded through those programs. Knowing the significant demands for health research funding in the province, our board approved new programming aimed at increasing research group activity in Saskatchewan. Additional programming will follow the development of a provincial health research strategy expected in 2004-05.

> "WITHOUT A DOUBT, THE PREDOMINANT MESSAGE FROM THE ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS FOR SHRF WAS 'FOCUS AND PURSUE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES' RIGOROUSLY."
>
> Judy Birdsell, project consultant

It was important for the Foundation to define goals and objectives in consultation with the research community and other provincial partners. Thanks to those of you who participated in the consultation processes over the summer and fall of 2003, which provided key information for our report to the Minister of Health on defining a provincial health research strategy. The rich feedback and evidence gathered through this process will help frame new SHRF initiatives and programming in the coming year.

The board also spent considerable time reviewing and evaluating existing funding programs, exploring the provincial and national health research environments, and linking with national funding organizations. We share some common challenges with other funding agencies in Canada and hope to exchange best practices in addressing them. Two examples are evaluating the long-term impact of research funding and exploring strategies for ensuring funded research leads to benefits for our citizens (i.e., knowledge translation or exchange). This work has already started, with visits during the year from directors at the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and other agencies to explore potential regional and national collaborations.

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Liz Harrison (Chair)
University of Saskatchewan

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still very new, of course, and our first year was focused on getting operational and defining directions. In the coming year, we will be implementing our communications plan, with a very high priority on meeting and talking with more people around the province. We look forward to sharing our plans and our vision for "building a healthy Saskatchewan through health research."

E. L. Harrison, PhD, MSc, BPT
Chair, SHRF

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Liz Harrison (Chair)
University of Saskatchewan

Ralph Nilson (Vice-Chair)
University of Regina

John Bice
Saskatchewan Gaming

Alan Boulton
Alvea Biopharmaceuticals Inc.

Neena Chappell
University of Victoria

James Cunningham (to 01/04)
Cumberland Co-Operative

Louis Delbaere
University of Saskatchewan

Gary Glavin
University of Manitoba

Murray Knuttila
Regina Qu'Appelle Regional Health Authority

Pauline Rousseau
Saskatchewan Health

Hal Sanders
Saskatchewan Industry & Resources

Tom Wishart
University of Saskatchewan

CEO'S MESSAGE

Looking back over 2003-04, it's clear that planning and development consumed most of our energies as we launched the Foundation. We started with a major nine-month project to assist the Minister of Health in developing a provincial health research strategy. With a contractor for the bulk of the work, we were still very involved with planning various stages, co-ordinating the round-table discussions, and producing the related publications. A broad range of individuals – including health researchers, university leaders, health professionals, Aboriginal leaders, business people, and community representatives – shared their thoughts about the value of health research and about research priorities. Their views shaped our report to the Minister of Health and will shape the Foundation's plans for a good while to come.

> "I THINK WE NEED TO PUT A FACE ON RESEARCH IN THE PROVINCE ... IT'S GOING TO REQUIRE MORE OF A COMMUNICATIONS EXERCISE IN DEMONSTRATING WE'RE GETTING GOOD VALUE FOR OUR MONEY."
>
> A provincial policy analyst

Communications was another major development area. We undertook a communication audit, again relying on our stakeholders for input. While some people knew little about us, others expressed high expectations for SHRF in developing health research in the province. This work pointed us to several priority areas for our early communications work: strengthening our visual identity; increasing awareness of our mission; using more in-person meetings to connect with stakeholders; promoting health research success stories; and building our internal communications capacity. A strong communications portfolio will be critical to every aspect of our work.

In exploring our mandate to seek additional funds for health research, we turned to experts in the field. Initial advice suggests that, as a public agency, we should rely on strategic partnerships and, respecting the role of charitable agencies that fund research, avoid traditional public campaigns. We are awaiting some additional advice on opportunities, challenges, and feasible approaches for us in this area.

In developing our knowledge dissemination (translation, transfer) role, we plan to draw on existing research and share best practices with other funding agencies. Regular meetings of provincial agencies from across the country began a couple of years ago, providing a powerful venue for sharing ideas and strategies for addressing common challenges. Key agenda items during 2003-04 were effective partnerships, evaluation methods for research funding, and knowledge translation strategies.

Some changes occurred in our funding programs during 2003-04 (see "Funding Programs") and we anticipate further adjustments after the provincial health research strategy is released. Our peer-review processes carried forward generally intact from Health Services Utilization and Research Commission. We were very fortunate that our existing review committee chairs and many committee members agreed to serve another year, ensuring a smooth transition from the HSURC to SHRF.

June Bold
Chief Executive Officer

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We achieved our work this year with a budget of just over $6-million. Our main source of revenue was the provincial government, with 90% from Saskatchewan Health, and the remainder from Saskatchewan Industry and Resources and some interest from investments. On the expense side, 92% of our resources were directed to funding research and 8% to operations.

Staffing changes during the year included the addition of a new program and evaluation officer, Lori Ebbesen, to take on the management of our peer review processes, plus responsibilities in evaluation and capacity-building workshops. Suzanne Cornforth was our communications consultant throughout the year, leading in developing the communications plan, writing research summaries and stories, and producing our new electronic newsletter. Christine Hansen joined us for a third summer as our student research assistant, contributing in many areas, including our regular evaluation surveys, updating our grants database, and policy research. Val Ziegler, our administrative secretary, continued managing our office, handling reception duties, and providing administrative support. Sherry Wailing, our accountant, carried us through the financial transition from HSURC to SHRF and helped implement a new grant payment system. Thanks to all of these individuals for their commitment and hard work during 2003-04!

All of us at the Foundation are looking forward to 2004-05, when the intense planning work of 2003-04 will translate into many new strategic actions for fulfilling our mandate. Now that we have "launched the Foundation," we are eager to see how it flies!

June M. Bold, MSc, BA
Chief Executive Officer, SHRF

SHRF STAFF

June Bold
Chief Executive Officer

Lori Ebbesen
Program & Evaluation Officer

Val Ziegler
Administrative Secretary

Sherry Wailing
Accountant

Suzanne Cornforth
Communications Consultant

DEVELOPING STRATEGY

The Project

As soon as the Foundation was formed in 2003, the Minister of Health asked for our advice on four strategic issues to assist him in developing a provincial health research strategy. A strategy would establish priority directions for health research in Saskatchewan and help ensure that the province's investment leads to benefits for its citizens. The key issues were: identifying strategic advantages for Saskatchewan in health research; articulating a balance among the different types of health research; establishing priorities for health research and ensuring health research contributes to the improvement of health services, health policy and the health status of Saskatchewan people.

Approach

We wanted to be sure we gathered broad input from people and agencies around the province, as well as current information about the state of health research in Saskatchewan and the provincial and national contexts in which our researchers work. We hired a consultant, Judy Birdsell of On Management Ltd., to work with us to design and implement the project.

In recent years in Saskatchewan, there have been various planning and visioning initiatives in the health sector and university research community. We attempted to build on those initiatives and seek new input from universities, regional health authorities, health care providers, the business community, charitable foundations, and community groups.

Steps

- Background research and key informant interviews (15), June 2003
- Discussion paper outlining issues and options, August 2003
- Web-based and paper survey based on the discussion paper, September - October 2003
- Round-table discussion sessions (5 around the province), November 2003
- Consultant's final report to our board, November 2003
- SHRF advice paper to the Minister of Health, January 2004

Publications

- Paper: "The Future of Health Research in Saskatchewan: We need your input!"
- Report: "Health Research in Saskatchewan: Charting a path," Judy Birdsell, On Management Ltd.

Future

The Minister of Health is currently considering our recommendations and we anticipate hearing about the strategy's release in the next few months. We look forward to seeing the provincial strategy unfold and to working with our many health research partners on its implementation.

TAKING FLIGHT

Mandate Areas	Looking Back at 2003-04 Action Highlights	Looking Ahead to 2004-05 Planned Activities
1 Encourage and facilitate health research	• Administered funding programs to establish new researchers, support research training, and tap into federal funding • Launched a new program to encourage the formation of new health research groups • Supported the Sask – CIHR Regional Partnership Program • Provided core funding for existing health research centres	• Offer and manage competitive health research funding programs to support objectives • Work with universities and health sector to offer capacity-building workshops • Continue supporting the Sask – CIHR Regional Partnership Program • Develop an ongoing program framework for core-funded research centres • Support conferences and similar events to advance and promote health research
2 Assist the Minister of Health to develop a provincial health research strategy	• Led a broad consultation and research project to identify key elements for a provincial health research strategy • Proposed a strategic health research framework to the Minister of Health	• Work with partners in launching the provincial health research strategy • Establish working groups to advance strategic directions being defined
3 Provide funding for research consistent with the provincial strategy	• n/a – Pending development of the strategy	• Review existing programs and activities for alignment with the strategy • Plan and undertake new programs and activities to support the strategy
4 Seek and receive funding for the advancement of health research	• Began exploring our role in pursuing additional funds	• Obtain expert advice on issues and opportunities for SHRF in this area • Pursue new matching and partnership opportunities
5 Disseminate information about the Foundation, research supported, and results of that research	• Developed a communications plan to support SHRF's key activities • Began exploring SHRF's role in research knowledge exchange • Promoted research successes through events, newsletter, and Web site	• Implement plans to strengthen connections with stakeholders • Implement plans to promote the value and benefits of health research • Continue defining SHRF's role in research knowledge translation

PROGRAMS

Funding Programs

Our funding programs are important tools for helping us fulfill our mandate. Currently, they have a strong developmental focus, aiming to build health research capacity and assist Saskatchewan researchers in stepping onto the highly competitive national scene. Within that developmental framework, we support a broad range of human health research, including basic biomedical science, clinical research, health services and systems research, and research into the cultural, social and environmental determinants of population health.

This section describes the funding programs we offered during 2003-04. The SHRF Awards Guide, published annually, describes all competition categories and related policies, including eligibility criteria and submission requirements. It is available from our office and Web site, along with application forms and other competition materials. Our Web site carries the most up-to-date programming information and competition results.

Our board approved $2-million in research grants and fellowships during 2003-04. Most of these are two-year awards that will be paid out in current and future years. Table 1 provides an overview of funding approved, with details of individual grants and fellowships shown throughout this section.

Table 1: Applications Received, Recommended, and Approved, 2003-04

Grant Category	Received		Recommended		Approved	
	No.	$	No.	$	No.	$
Research Establishment						
Biomedical	19	$1,507,659	14	$1,109,505	7	$557,062
Equipment (Biomedical)	15	394,069	12	295,034	6	167,970
Subtotal	34	$1,901,728	26	$1,404,539	13	$725,032
Socio-Health	10	$611,954	7	$481,389	3	$235,839
Equipment (Socio-Health)	0					
Subtotal	10	$611,954	7	$481,389	3	$235,839
Research Fellowships						
Postdoctoral	27	$2,241,000	24	$1,992,000	9	$747,000
Clinical	0					
Subtotal	27	$2,241,000	24	$1,992,000	9	$747,000
Focus on the Future*	8	$642,959	3	$128,959	3	$128,959
Strategic Development*	6	$175,817	2	$60,000	2	$60,000
Conference & Meeting	3	$10,500	0			
Research Group Facilitation	6	$239, 956	5	$199,956	5	$199,956
TOTAL	**94**	**$5,823,914**	**67**	**$4,266,843**	**35**	**$2,096,786**

*Some decisions were still pending at year-end.

Postdoctoral Research Fellowships

These awards offer an advanced full-time research training opportunity for individuals with a doctorate degree to work with an established researcher to develop their research skills further and equip themselves for a career in health research.

Salary stipend, $38,000/year, and research allowance, $3,500/year, for 2 years

RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

Infant Whooping Cough Vaccine

Doing a postdoctoral fellowship with Volker Gerdts at the Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization, **Shokrollah Elahi** hopes to contribute to developing better vaccines against whooping cough (pertussis) in humans. Past research has not been very successful in this area because the animal models used were not similar enough to humans to give useful information. Dr. Elahi is working with a pig model, since pigs and humans share many physiological traits. The team's ultimate goal is an aerosol or spray vaccine for infants.

Clinical Research Fellowships

This program is designed to assist individuals with professional health degrees to develop a research skill-set that will enable them to undertake a career as a clinician researcher in Saskatchewan. Award holders may undertake graduate research training during the fellowship.

Salary stipend, $38,000 to $48,000/year, and research allowance, $3,500/year, for 2 years

"WE CAN'T UNDERESTIMATE THE EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF RESEARCH - NEW KNOWLEDGE IS KEY TO TRAINING OUR NEXT GENERATION."

A University College of Medicine administrator

Research Fellowships

(supervisor's name in parentheses)

Postdoctoral Research Fellowships

Oksana Akhova (V. Misra)
Veterinary Microbiology, Veterinary Medicine, U of Saskatchewan
Functional role of Luman as a transcriptional activator in overcoming stress in differentiated neurons

Shokrollah Elahi (V. Gerdts & L. Babiuk)
Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization, U of Saskatchewan
Development of mucosal vaccines against Bordetella pertussis

Andrew Ficzycz (S.K. Tikoo)
Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization, U of Saskatchewan
Characterization of trans-acting factors necessary for encapsidation of porcine adenovirus type 3 DNA

Shao-Ping Ji (X. Zhang)
Psychiatry, Medicine, U of Saskatchewan
Identification of epileptogenetic genes in the rat kainic acid model of temporal lobe epilepsy

Mario Mayes (J. Singh & G. Adams)
Veterinary Biomedical Sciences, Veterinary Medicine, U of Saskatchewan
Identification of granuosa cell gene markers associated with oocyte competence

Ponniah Selvakumar (R.K. Sharma)
Pathology, Medicine, U of Saskatchewan
Role of N-Myristoyltransferase in normal and colon cancer tissues

Urmila Shinde (V. Gopalakrishnan)
Pharmacology, Medicine, U of Saskatchewan
Vasodilator actions of ghrelin and des-acyl ghrelin

Guangdong Yang (R. Wang)
Physiology, Medicine, U of Saskatchewan
Effects of hydrogen sulfide on apoptosis of vascular smooth muscle cells and underlying mechanisms

Chunfu Zheng (S. van den Hurk)
Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization, U of Saskatchewan
A genetic immunization adjuvant system based on BHV-1 VP22 antigen fusion

Research Establishment Grants

Asterisk (*) indicates accompanying equipment grant.

Biomedical

Mary-Jane Alcorn*
Pharmacy, Pharmacy and Nutrition, U of Saskatchewan
P-Glycoprotein expression in rat mammary epithelial cells during pregnancy and lactation: Implications and mechanism

Lalita Bharadwaj*
Institute of Agricultural Rural and Environmental Health, Medicine, U of Saskatchewan
Toxicogenomic assessment of agricultural chemicals in rural drinking water

Wei-Feng Dong*
Pathology, Medicine, U of Saskatchewan
The role of SET-7 in human acute myeloid leukemia

Volker Gerdts
Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization, U of Saskatchewan
Lymphocyte trafficking

Karen Machin*
Veterinary Biomedical Sciences, Veterinary Medicine, U of Saskatchewan
The role of free-ranging ducks in the transmission and spread of West Nile Virus in Western Canada

Darrell Mousseau*
Psychiatry, Medicine, U of Saskatchewan
The interaction between VDAC and pro-apoptotic Bax is determined by phosphorylation of immunoreceptor tyrosine-based motifs in VDAC

Helen Nichol*
Anatomy and Cell Biology, Medicine, U of Saskatchewan
Insights in neurodegeneration using synchrotron technology: X-ray absorption spectroscopy (XAS) and XAS imaging of brain iron in Drosophila models of human neurodegenerative diseases

Research Establishment Grants

These grants aid new university faculty in establishing independent health research programs within the province and achieving the research productivity necessary for obtaining longer term and more substantial funding from national and other external agencies.

Up to $40,000/year for 2 years

Establishment Equipment Grants

Applicants for Research Establishment Grants may also apply for an additional grant to acquire major equipment essential to their research programs.

Up to $30,000

RESEARCH SPOTLIGHTS

Drinking Water Quality

Lalita Bharadwaj, a new faculty member at the Institute for Agricultural, Rural, and Environmental Health, University of Saskatchewan, is studying the issue of water quality in Saskatchewan. Drinking water is often routinely contaminated by low levels of nitrates in rural Canada, yet little is known about whether these chronic low-level exposures pose a human health risk or how serious the risk might be. Using gene-based studies, Dr. Bharadwaj is hoping to gain insight into these risks and how exposure to such contaminants may affect genes and cells.

Part-Time Work and Health

In today's competitive workplaces, cost-reducing strategies such as hiring part-time, contract and temporary workers have become commonplace. **Michael Polanyi**, a new faculty member in Kinesiology and Health Studies, University of Regina, is interested in examining the complicated and sometimes controversial effects of these strategies on employees' health. Working with government, work-places and communities in an action-research approach, Dr. Polanyi and his team will examine these emerging health issues and work towards promoting healthier and more productive workplace practices.

Conference and Meeting Grants

These matching grants support conferences and meetings that advance the development of health research knowledge exchange in Saskatchewan. The program ran until December 31st, after which time it was suspended pending revision to address SHRF's broadened mandate more effectively.

Up to $5,000

Focus on the Future Grants

This program concluded its three-year term this year. The Focus on the Future Program provides supplemental funding for graduate student support to Saskatchewan university faculty who obtain a major national strategic grant in one of these four areas: rural health, Aboriginal health, health policy, and health applications of the synchrotron. The grants must receive initial SHRF approval before the national deadline; they become final when national funding is approved.

Up to $40,000/year for 3 years

RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

Aboriginal End-of-Life Care

With a Focus on the Future Grant, **Mary Hampton** of Luther College, University of Regina, will be able to recruit several graduate students to work with her on her nationally funded (CIHR) project to increase awareness of palliative care services among Aboriginal patients and their families. The team also hopes to enhance health professionals' awareness of end-of-life health care needs among increase use of such services and to build the general knowledge base about Aboriginal end-of-life medicine and healing in contemporary settings.

Socio-Health

Wendy Duggleby
Nursing, U of Saskatchewan
Development, implementation and initial evaluation of a psychosocial supportive hope focused program for palliative care patients with advanced cancer

Punham Pahwa
Institute of Agricultural Rural and Environmental Health, Medicine, U of Saskatchewan
Longitudinal changes in health-related quality of life in grain workers with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease

Michael Polanyi
Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit, and Kinesiology and Health Studies, U of Regina
Understanding and addressing the health impacts of flexible organizational practices in Saskatchewan: A collaborative inquiry

Focus on the Future Grants

Mary Hampton
Psychology, Luther College, U of Regina
With A. Baydala, T. Hadjistavropoulos, C. Bourassa
Developing and piloting cross-cultural curriculum for delivery and utilization of end of life health care services

Ronald Labonte
Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit, and Community Health and Epidemiology, Medicine, U of Saskatchewan
With M. Polanyi, S. Abonyi, A. Williams, N. Muhajarine, R. Torgerson, J. Spiegel, T. Schrecker, A. Ostry, M. Jones
Health, globalization, Africa and the G8: Promises kept, broken, right or wrong

Ronald Labonte
Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit, and Community Health and Epidemiology, Medicine, U of Saskatchewan
With T. McIntosh, A. Kazanjian, D. Zakus
Equity and health human resources: Canada and the "brain drain" from Sub-Saharan Africa

Research Group Facilitation Grants

Immunology Group
Microbiology and Immunology, Medicine, U of Saskatchewan
Group leaders: Peter Bretscher & John Gordon

Neural Systems and Plasticity Group
Anatomy & Cell Biology, Medicine, U of Saskatchewan
Group leader: Michael Corcoran

Cancer Proteomics Group
Health Research Division, Saskatchewan Cancer Agency, and Pathology, Medicine, U of Saskatchewan
Group leaders: John DeCoteau & Ron Geyer

Molecular Design Group
Biochemistry, Medicine, U of Saskatchewan
Group leader: Louis Delbaere

Cardiovascular Research Group
Physiology, Medicine, U of Saskatchewan
Group leader: Rui Wang

Partnership Grants

Debra Morgan
Institute of Agricultural Rural and Environmental Health, Medicine, U of Saskatchewan
Towards: Strategies to improve the care of persons with dementia in rural and remote areas

Gregg Adams
Veterinary Biomedical Sciences, Veterinary Medicine, and Biomedical Imaging and Therapy Program, U of Saskatchewan
Towards: Biomedical beamline at the Canadian Light Source

Research Group Facilitation Grants

This new program was launched in the fall of 2003 to facilitate the formation and development of new health research groups in the province. Groups consist of researchers with common health-related interests who are interested in building a longer-term association with each other that will benefit their research productivity and competitiveness for national funding. Areas of study should help advance strategic research directions within the home institution or the province. SHRF funds must be matched by financial contributions from the researchers' home institution.

Up to $20,000/year for 2 years

RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

Neural Systems and Plasticity Group

Michael Corcoran from the College of Medicine, University of Saskatchewan, is leading a new neuroscience research group working on a variety of neurological disorders, including epilepsy, spinal cord damage and stroke, as well as on developmental issues such as aging, learning and memory. The team comprises a broad range of disciplines – kinesiology, anatomy, neuro-psychiatry, and psychology, to mention some. Their goal is to identify new areas of working together that could eventually lead to novel and more effective treatments. SHRF funds this group in partnership with the University of Saskatchewan.

Partnership Grants

On occasion, SHRF may provide matching funds to Saskatchewan researchers who have a special or unique opportunity to secure a national strategic grant that will be of particular importance to their research program and to the broader health research environment. Decisions occur on a case-by-case basis, normally in advance of the national application deadline. Final approval depends on obtaining the national peer-reviewed grant and on funding availability.

Variable amounts

Strategic Development Grants

This program concluded its original three-year term this year. Strategic Development Grants support teams led by Saskatchewan university faculty members to prepare a full submission to a national strategic grant initiative, such as those offered periodically by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. Work supported must be collaborative and multi-disciplinary.

Up to $30,000

RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

Preventing FASD

With a Strategic Development Grant, **Nazeem Muhajarine** of Community Health and Epidemiology and the Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit at University of Saskatchewan, is leading a broad, multi-disciplinary team in developing a national strategic grant proposal to study Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). Though there have been some advances, much remains to be done in FASD research and prevention. This team of university researchers and community-based professionals plans to develop a comprehensive long-term research program.

Core-Funded Research Centres

We carry on funding responsibility for six research centres, transferred from Saskatchewan Health or the Health Services Utilization and Research Commission – see the listing in this section. Early on, we took steps to ensure that funding to these centres was not disrupted in the transfer and that we learned about the research work and priorities of all the centres. In the coming year, we will focus on developing an overall program framework for research-centre funding, including review and evaluation criteria.

Funding levels and terms vary (see note 7, financial statements)

Strategic Development Grants

Nazeem Muhajarine
Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit, and Community Health and Epidemiology, Medicine, U of Saskatchewan
With D. Lehotay, P. Blakley, B. Beatty, G. Zello, G. Merasty, K. Waygood, J. Nanson, P. Butt, B. Merasty
Preventing FASD, caring for children with FASD through interdisciplinary research, community participation and intervention

Jim Xiang
Cancer Research Unit, Saskatchewan Cancer Ageny, and Oncology, Medicine, U of Saskatchewan
With Z. Jia, M. Singh, A. Saxena, E. Dudzic
Structure/functional analysis of phage-derived and molecularly designed loop peptides with high affinity for human tumor-specific NeuAc2-6aGal-Nacal-O-Ser epitope

Core-Funded Research Centres

Canadian Centre for Analysis of Regionalization and Health, Inc. (Saskatoon)
Executive Director: Denise Kouri
www.regionalization.org

Cancer Research Unit, Saskatchewan Cancer Agency
Chief Executive Officer: Bob Allen
www.scf.sk.ca

Institute for Agricultural, Rural, and Environmental Health
College of Medicine, U of Saskatchewan
Director: James Dosman
www.IAREH.usask.ca

Indigenous Peoples' Health Research Centre
First Nations University of Canada (Regina)
Principal Investigator: Eber Hampton
www.iphrc.ca

Neuropsychiatry Research Unit
College of Medicine, U of Saskatchewan
Director: Xin-Min Li
www.usask.ca/psychiatry/neuroresearch.html

Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit
U of Regina and U of Saskatchewan
Director: Ron Labonte
www.spheru.ca

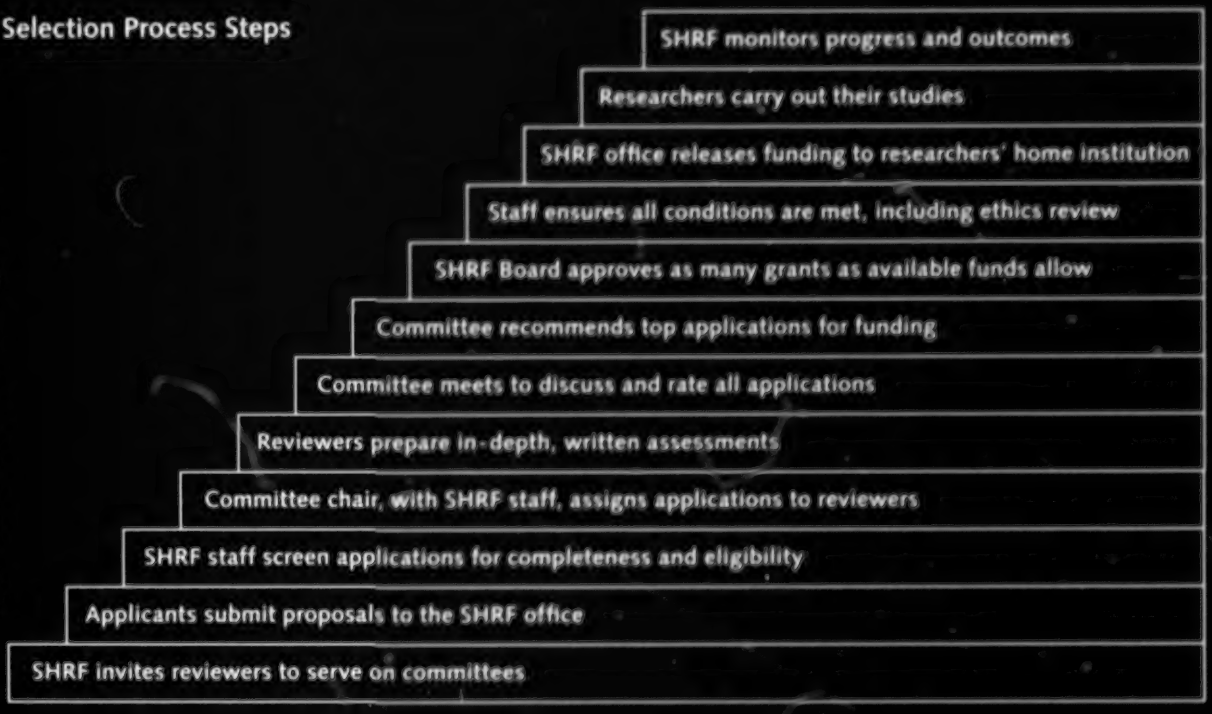
PEER REVIEW PROCESS

Our selection processes are founded on peer review, where panels of active researchers assess research proposals using excellence and relevance as key deciding factors. Applications must also meet the stated objectives and priorities for the particular funding program (described in the SHRF Awards Guide).

We primarily select our review committee chairs and members from Saskatchewan's health research and service communities and we also call on reviewers from outside the province for certain programs. The lists in this section indicate our active review committees during 2003-04 and their members.

We are extremely grateful to our review committee members who so generously provide their expertise on a volunteer basis, usually for three-year terms. These dedicated individuals contribute to the collective wisdom that is critical to the quality of our review processes.

Selection Process Steps


SHRF monitors progress and outcomes
Researchers carry out their studies
SHRF office releases funding to researchers' home institution
Staff ensures all conditions are met, including ethics review
SHRF Board approves as many grants as available funds allow
Committee recommends top applications for funding
Committee meets to discuss and rate all applications
Reviewers prepare in-depth, written assessments
Committee chair, with SHRF staff, assigns applications to reviewers
SHRF staff screen applications for completeness and eligibility
Applicants submit proposals to the SHRF office
SHRF invites reviewers to serve on committees

Figures in parentheses indicate number of years served, including current competition.

Biomedical Establishment Grant Review Committee

Gordon Asmundson (Chair) (3)
Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies
University of Regina

Jay Biem (1)
Medicine, College of Medicine
University of Saskatchewan

Peter Bretscher (1)
Microbiology and Immunology
College of Medicine
University of Saskatchewan

Philip Chilibeck (3)
College of Kinesiology
University of Saskatchewan

Tanya Dahms (3)
Chemistry and Biochemistry
Faculty of Science
University of Regina

John DeCoteau (3)
Pathology, College of Medicine
University of Saskatchewan

Eleanor Fernandez (3)
Oral Biology, College of Dentistry
University of Saskatchewan

Phyllis Paterson (1)
Nutrition and Dietetics
College of Pharmacy and Nutrition
University of Saskatchewan

Elemir Simko (1)
Veterinary Pathology
Western College of Veterinary Medicine
University of Saskatchewan

Socio-Health Grants and Awards Review Committee

Liz Harrison (Chair) (3)
Physical Therapy, College of Medicine
University of Saskatchewan

Sheila Evans (1)
Faculty of Nursing
University of Calgary

Kathryn Green (3)
Community Health and Epidemiology
College of Medicine
University of Saskatchewan

Murray Knuttila (2)
Sociology and Social Studies
Faculty of Arts
University of Regina

Lisa Lix (3)
Community Health Sciences
Faculty of Medicine
University of Manitoba

Richard MacLennan (3)
Psychology, Faculty of Arts
University of Regina

Biomedical Personnel Awards Review Committee

Dan de Vlieger (Chair) (7)
Political Science, Faculty of Arts
University of Regina

Neil Ashton (3)
Biology, Faculty of Science
University of Regina

Keith Bonham (2)
Cancer Research Unit
Saskatchewan Cancer Agency

Deborah Haines (1)
Veterinary Physiological Sciences
Western College of Veterinary Medicine
University of Saskatchewan

Suzanne Laferte (2)
Biochemistry, College of Medicine
University of Saskatchewan

Anurag Saxena (3)
Pathology, College of Medicine
University of Saskatchewan

Valerie Verge (1)
Anatomy and Cell Biology
College of Medicine
University of Saskatchewan

Bruce Waygood (3)
Office of the Vice-President (Research)
University of Saskatchewan

Gordon Zello (3)
Nutrition and Dietetics
College of Pharmacy and Nutrition
University of Saskatchewan

Strategic Development Grant Review Committee

Liz Harrison (Chair) (3)
Physical Therapy, College of Medicine
University of Saskatchewan

Katherine Bergman (3)
Faculty of Science
University of Regina

Gary Glavin (3)
National Microbiology Laboratory,
Winnipeg

Bill Roesler (3)
Biochemistry, College of Medicine
University of Saskatchewan

Research Group Facilitation Grant Review Committee

Tom Wishart (Chair) (1)
College of Graduate Studies and Research
University of Saskatchewan

Leon Browder (1)
Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
Faculty of Medicine
University of Calgary

Gordon Glazner (1)
Neurodegenerative Disease Research Unit
St. Boniface Hospital, Winnipeg

Lloyd Sutherland (1)
Lloyd Sutherland Group, Calgary

PARTNERSHIPS

Fostering health research is a collaborative enterprise, and we value the connections we have with other health research stakeholders both inside and outside the province.

Sask-CIHR Regional Partnership Program

The Saskatchewan-Canadian Institutes of Health Research Regional Partnership Program (Sask-CIHR RPP) began in 1999, when our provincial government and the Medical Research Council of Canada (later CIHR) agreed to invest $5-million each over five years in a 1:1 matching program to increase health research funding in Saskatchewan.

During 2003-04, provincial matching funds were provided by Saskatchewan Health, Saskatchewan Industry and Resources, and SHRF. Our office manages and disburses the provincial funds, as directed by a local advisory committee.

> "THE MOST BURNING NEED FOR US IS TO WORK MORE CLOSELY WITH SHRF TO DEVELOP MORE RESEARCH CAPACITY. OUR PROPORTION OF FUNDING FROM OUR NATIONAL BODY IS LOW. WE'D LIKE TO SEE MORE AND BETTER APPLICATIONS TO INCREASE THAT MONEY. WE CAN WORK TOGETHER."
>
> Saskatchewan charitable agency representative

Applications that meet CIHR's scientific standards but are not supported by its regular funding pool are eligible for RPP support. Saskatchewan's advisory committee decides which of these applications meet criteria tailored to developing health research capacity in the province.

Table 2 shows new commitments totaling $2.5-million in 2003-04. This brings the five-year total to $10.5-million, an amount calculated using award values originally approved. Due to adjustments for grants that end early, the amount actually being paid out is just under $10-million. That is, virtually all available funds for the current five-year phase of the program have been committed.

Based on a mid-term review done last year and more recent analyses, it is clear that the program has been effective in increasing the amount of CIHR-funded research occurring in Saskatchewan and particularly in starting new research or bridging programs for established researchers. The program also contributes to student training and to the creation of highly-skilled jobs in the community.

CIHR is extending the program into 2004-05 and 2005-06; its life beyond that will depend on an evaluation that CIHR will conduct. SHRF will provide the bulk of provincial matching funds for this renewed phase and is seeking additional partners to create the required $1-million local matching fund.

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University Co-ordinator of Health Research

In a five-year partnership, SHRF provides $100,000 annually and the University of Saskatchewan (U of S), $50,000, to operate the office of the University Co-ordinator of Health Research, which is housed in the Office of the Vice-President, Research, at the U of S.

> "BETTER COHESIVENESS BETWEEN RESEARCHERS, POLICY MAKERS AND COMMUNITIES WOULD MAKE SASKATCHEWAN MORE COMPETITIVE FOR RESEARCH DOLLARS..."
>
> Judy Birdsell, project consultant

Dr. Bruce Waygood, in the position since July 2000, works with health researchers around the province to increase the number and quality of Saskatchewan applications to CIHR. The role is multi-faceted, from encouraging more national grant applications to bringing together potential collaborators to developing an internal pre-review system.

Dr. Waygood reports that Saskatchewan's success rates have improved greatly in certain CIHR program areas, notably the strategic competitions. However, success rates in CIHR's operating grant competitions are still generally low relative to the national average. Dr. Waygood will be working with researchers, administrators, and SHRF to identify new strategies for addressing this situation.

SHRF and the U of S undertook a mid-term review of the position in early 2003, as required in the partnership agreement. A three-person review panel sought input broadly within the research community about performance, impact, and future directions. The consensus was that the position has been a tremendous success, as measured by increased CIHR grants to Saskatchewan, and that ongoing support should be secured for making this a permanent role.

Table 2: Sask-CIHR RPP Grants and Awards Approved*

Type	Term	Number Approved			Approved Funding ($) **			
		1999-2002	2003-04	Total	1999-2002	2003-04	Total	
Faculty Salary Awards	5 years	10	3	13	3,300,000	935,000	4,235,000	40%
Operating Grants	2 years	34	9	43	4,462,122	1,504,218	5,966,340	57%
Equipment Grants	1 year	17	3	20	222,098	68,178	290,276	63%
TOTAL	—	**61**	**15**	**76**	**7,984,220**	**2,507,396**	**10,491,616**	**100%**

* A list of approved grants and awards is available upon request.

** Approved amounts include both the CIHR and SHRF commitments, matched 1:1. These amounts are as originally approved and do not reflect subsequent adjustments due to changes such as early terminations. Actual amounts paid do not exceed $10-million.

MEASURING SUCCESS

Evaluating our funding programs is critical to answering questions about the extent to which our program goals are achieved and about our contribution to building research capacity in Saskatchewan. Our evaluations are designed to ensure accountability for our program priorities and research funding decisions, to inform our strategic planning, and to contribute to knowledge about assessing the value and impact of research funding.

Our interest in evaluating research funding programs is shared by other funding agencies – nationally and internationally – with the question often being phrased in terms of "return on investment." We use various methods to collect information at several points in time – from the early days of the application process to five years following a grant. We believe that health research has impact on many levels and strive to measure effects on health knowledge, research and practice, the economy, and teaching.

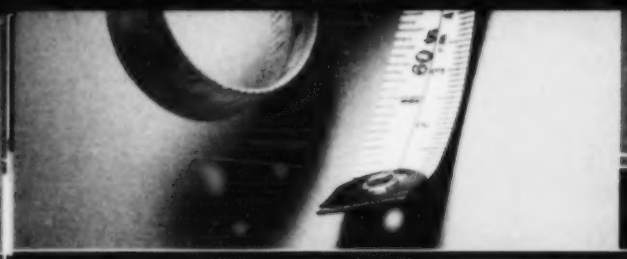
> "THE PUBLIC'S SENSE IS THAT RESEARCH IS COMING FROM OUTSIDE THE PROVINCE – WE NEED TO PUT A FACE ON WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE AND HOW IT CONTRIBUTES TO PUBLIC HEALTH AND BETTER MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH CARE..."
>
> A Provincial policy analyst

Activity

In our analyses of application trends since 1996 (data not presented here), we found that SHRF's programs have had sustained or increased interest in recent years. Our core programs, the Postdoctoral Research Fellowship Program and Research Establishment Grant Program, have consistently attracted a strong number of applications. Our shorter-term programs, the Strategic Development Grant and Focus on the Future Programs, showed modest but sustained interest during their three-year life spans.

Outcomes

Data from progress and final reports required from all grant and award holders provide us with outcome data – things we can measure during the grant's term or just after it is finished. We find that a majority of SHRF-funded research fellows complete their two-year terms (74%) and accomplish a first-author peer-reviewed publication (88%). Similarly, a majority of Research Establishment Grant holders complete their grants. However, follow-up with these researchers reveals lower than expected results in retaining researchers in the province and in researchers obtaining subsequent major research grants – issues that need to be explored further. Other outcomes noted include: recruiting a new clinical scientist to the province, employing graduate students, and creating new multi-disciplinary and international research teams.



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Impact

Data collected from five-year follow-up surveys show that the funding programs have numerous positive effects on researchers' careers and help to strengthen the research environment. Fellows and supervisors alike credit the research fellowships with high or medium importance for contributing to career development, building research capacity, and securing additional funding. Consistent with their main aim, Research Establishment Grants are rated as important for establishing research careers and fostering subsequent grant development.

Other benefits reported include connections with government and industry, dissemination of research findings, advancements in health practice and policy, the injection of new knowledge into teaching, and the creation of an educational forum for researchers. The stories in this section are based on our five-year follow-up surveys and illustrate the multiple impacts of two research grants received in 1998.

In working towards our mandate to ensure that research leads to benefits for the people of Saskatchewan, we will be devoting even more attention to evaluation. We will continue to exchange ideas about best practices with similar agencies in other provinces and on the national scene, all of which are increasingly being called upon to measure and report on the value and benefits derived from the health research investment.

IMPACT STORY

Treating Leukemia

John DeCoteau, Department of Pathology, College of Medicine, University of Saskatchewan, and Cancer Research Unit, Saskatchewan Cancer Agency

Acute leukemias are cancers of the blood-forming cells that develop when genetic changes occur in genes that regulate cell growth. Abnormal DNA mismatch repair is one mechanism by which cancers develop genetic changes. From a 1998 Research Establishment Grant from SHRF's predecessor, HSURC, John and his co-investigators have leveraged national grants totaling $1.16 million. *"The grant was very influential in my career decision to return to Saskatchewan and to continue to do research here,"* John says.

Impact

...on health: His results have improved diagnostic approaches in human blood cancers and have played a major role in attracting academic pathologists and oncologists to Saskatchewan.

...on research and practice: He has co-authored 15 papers, including four as principal investigator in the high impact journals *Blood* and *Leukemia Research*. His research has contributed to the formation of a SHRF-funded genomics-based cancer research group at the U of S.

...on the economy: HSURC's initial investment returned $1.16 million dollars in additional research funding to Saskatchewan. In addition, John's research has provided employment for 10 researchers over the five-year period.

...on teaching: John's work has led to genomics research that he teaches to medical students and biomedical graduate students as examples of the power of molecular medicine in improving diagnosis and treatment. During this time he has trained one Masters student, one Ph.D. Student and three postdoctoral fellows.

IMPACT STORY

Seniors' Health

Muriel Montbriand, Applied Research Unit, Psychiatry, College of Medicine, and College of Nursing, University of Saskatchewan

Muriel has spent the past seven years investigating how knowledge and life experiences affect chronically-ill seniors' perceptions of their illnesses. With Socio-Health Research Grants in 1998 and 2001, from SHRF's predecessor, HSURC, Muriel has shown that seniors are sometimes unsure about the meaning of their diagnoses and how their medication prescriptions work. In further research, through recording life history narratives, she also learned that optimistic seniors rarely connect past difficult decision-making with their current illnesses, while pessimistic seniors do make that link. *"The grant was very important in establishing this research,"* Muriel says, *"and the program that followed was boosted by the second grant. I couldn't have otherwise started this work, and the continuing results are a tribute to that support."*

Impact

...on health: Muriel's findings should prove useful in improving patient education materials aimed at seniors. This should lead to better informed and healthier, more independent Saskatchewan seniors.

...on research and practice: The body of knowledge has been enriched in Muriel's field by publication of five scholarly papers and 26 conference presentations, especially since this type of ethnomethod-research (qualitative) has rarely been done with seniors.

...on the economy: Muriel's research provided employment for five people through the five-year grant period.

...on teaching: Muriel is able to use examples from her research to explain qualitative methods and traditions in her Qualitative Research Class for the Nursing Masters Program.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

REPORT OF MANAGEMENT

Management is responsible for the integrity of the financial information reported by the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation. Fulfilling this responsibility requires the preparation and presentation of financial statements and other financial information in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles that are consistently applied, with any exceptions specifically described in the financial statements.

The accounting system used by the Foundation includes an appropriate system of internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that:

- transactions are authorized;
- the assets of the Foundation are protected from loss and unauthorized use; and
- the accounts are properly kept and financial reports are properly monitored to ensure reliable information is provided for preparation of financial statements and other financial information.

To ensure management meets its responsibilities for financial reporting and internal control, board members of the Foundation discuss audit and financial reporting matters with representatives of management at regular meetings. Foundation board members have also reviewed and approved the financial statements with representatives of management.

The Provincial Auditor of Saskatchewan has audited the Foundation's statement of financial position, statements of revenue, expenditure and changes in fund balance, and statement of cash flows. His responsibility is to express an opinion on the fairness of management's financial statements. The Auditor's report outlines the scope of his audit and his opinion.

E. L. Harrison, PhD, MSc, BPT
Chair

June M. Bold, MSc, BA
Chief Executive Officer

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
May 27, 2004

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Chair

June M. Bold, MSc, BA
Chief Executive Officer

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
May 27, 2004

AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Members of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

I have audited the statement of financial position of the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation as at March 31, 2004 and the statements of revenue, expenses and changes in fund balance and cash flows for the year then ended. The Foundation's management is responsible for preparing these financial statements for Treasury Board's approval. My responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on my audit.

I conducted my audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that I plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

In my opinion, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation as at March 31, 2004 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

Regina, Saskatchewan
May 27, 2004

Fred Wendel, CMA, CA
Provincial Auditor

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As at March 31

	2004					2003
	Operating Fund	HEALNet Research Project	SPHERU Fund	RPP Fund	Total	Total
		(Note 2(a) ii)	(Note 5)	(Note 6)		(Note 13)
ASSETS						
Current assets:						
Cash	$ 147,952	$ —	$ —	$ —	$ 147,952	$ 424,182
Accrued interest receivable	8,338	—	—		8,338	4,080
Accounts receivable	7,619	—	—	—	7,619	17,182
Accounts receivable - SK Industry and Resources		—	—	—	—	125,000
Short-term investments (Schedule 1)	1,476,873	—	—	—	1,476,873	2,664,462
Prepaid expenses	401	—	—	—	401	378
	1,641,183	—	—	—	1,641,183	3,235,284
Long-term investments (Schedule 1)	3,733,070	—	—	1,401,917	5,134,987	3,627,561
Capital assets (Note 2(c) and 3)	29,025	—	—	—	29,025	10,804
Total assets	$ 5,403,278	$ —	$ —	$ 1,401,917	$ 6,805,195	$ 6,873,649
LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCE						
Liabilities:						
Accounts payable	$ 1,397	$ —	$ —	$ —	$ 1,397	$ 22,952
Grants payable	407,496	—	—	—	407,496	668,655
Total liabilities	408,893	—	—	—	408,893	691,607
Fund balances:						
Externally restricted	—	—	—	—	—	12,304
Internally restricted (Schedule 2)	4,239,130	—	—	1,401,917	5,641,047	1,511,344
Unrestricted	755,255	—	—	—	755,255	4,658,394
Fund balances (Statement 2)	4,994,385	—	—	1,401,917	6,396,302	6,182,042
Commitments (Note 4)						
Total liabilities and fund balance	$ 5,403,278	$ —	$ —	$ 1,401,917	$ 6,805,195	$ 6,873,649

(See accompanying notes to the financial statements)

STATEMENT OF REVENUE, EXPENSES AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCE

For the Year Ended March 31

	2004						2003
	Operating Fund Budget	Operating Fund Actual	HEALNet Research Project	SPHERU Fund	RPP Fund	Total	Total
	(Note 11)		(Note 2(a) ii)	(Note 5)	(Note 6)		(Note 13)
Revenue:							
General Revenue Fund							
Saskatchewan Health	$ 2,608,000	$ 5,283,000	$ —	$ 250,000	$ 400,000	$ 5,933,000	$ 1,684,668
Saskatchewan Industry and Resources	—	—	—	—	250,000	250,000	125,000
Interest	230,000	316,050	—	25,000	—	341,050	45,686
Recoveries	25,000	33,296	—	—	—	33,296	—
Donations	—	100	—	—	—	100	—
Miscellaneous	—	135	—	—	—	135	1,685
Total revenue	2,863,000	5,632,581	—	275,000	650,000	6,557,581	1,857,039
Expenses:							
Personnel awards	664,188	527,937	—	—	—	527,937	—
Research grants	1,694,765	1,101,870	—	—	—	1,101,870	51,000
Partnerships	100,000	100,000	—	754,335	703,233	1,557,568	35,000
Centres	—	2,675,000	—	—	—	2,675,000	—
Wages and benefits	237,460	229,637	—	—	—	229,637	28,223
Administrative and operating expenses	247,540	197,752	12,304	—	—	210,056	33,442
Honoraria and expenses of the board and committees	49,635	41,253	—	—	—	41,253	3,733
Total expenses	2,993,588	4,873,449	12,304	754,335	703,233	6,343,321	151,398
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	$ (130,588)	759,132	(12,304)	(479,335)	(53,233)	214,260	1,705,641
Fund balance, beginning of year		4,658,394	12,304	1,231,551	279,793	6,182,042	4,476,401
Transfers between funds							
(Note 5(a) and 6)		(423,141)	—	323,141	100,000	—	—
(Note 5(b))		—	—	(1,075,357)	1,075,357	—	—
Fund balance, end of year (Statement 1)		$ 4,994,385	$ —	$ —	$ 1,401,917	$ 6,396,302	$ 6,182,042

(See accompanying notes to the financial statements)

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

For the Year Ended March 31

	2004					2003
	Operating Fund	HEALNet Research Project	SPHERU Fund	RPP Fund	Total	Total
		(Note 2(a) ii)	(Note 5)	(Note 6)		(Note 13)
Operating Activities:						
Cash provided by:						
General Revenue Fund						
Saskatchewan Health	$ 5,283,000	$ —	$ 250,000	$ 400,000	$ 5,933,000	$ 1,529,834
Saskatchewan Industry and Resources	—	—	—	375,000	375,000	—
Other receipts	22,641	—	—	—	22,641	27,739
Interest	1,972	—	—	—	1,972	119
Transfer from HSURC	—	—	—	—	—	(219,516)
	5,307,613	—	250,000	775,000	6,332,613	1,338,176
Cash used for:						
Wages and benefits	230,124	—	—	—	230,124	28,233
Grant and award payments	4,637,994	—	754,335	703,233	6,095,562	342,175
Supplies and other	267,739	—	—	—	267,739	41,803
	5,135,857	—	754,335	703,233	6,593,425	412,211
Total operating activities	171,756	—	(504,335)	71,767	(260,812)	925,965
Investment activities:						
Decrease (increase) in investments	5,609	—	1,256,551	(1,247,124)	15,036	(500,000)
Purchases of capital assets	(30,454)	—	—	—	(30,454)	(1,783)
	(24,845)	—	1,256,551	(1,247,124)	(15,418)	(501,783)
Net increase (decrease) in cash	146,911	—	752,216	(1,175,357)	(276,230)	424,182
Cash, beginning of year	424,182	—	—	—	424,182	—
Transfers between funds						
(Note 5(a) and 6)	(423,141)	—	323,141	100,000	—	—
(Note 5(b))	—	—	(1,075,357)	1,075,357	—	—
Cash, end of year	$ 147,952	$ —	$ —	$ —	$ 147,952	$ 424,182

(See accompanying notes to the financial statements)

SCHEDULE OF INVESTMENTS

For the Year Ended March 31, 2004

	MATURITY DATE	CARRYING VALUE	EFFECTIVE RATE
Short-term investments:			
Money Market Fund	—	$ 84,610	
Prov of BC Strip Bond	21-Jun-2004	150,806	6.49
Prov of BC Strip Bond	9-Dec-2004	385,050	6.14
Prov of BC Strip Bond	9-Jan-2005	469,699	6.36
Prov of BC Strip Bond	23-Feb-2005	386,708	6.17
		1,476,873	
Long-term investments:			
Ontario Hydro	11-Apr-2005	291,433	5.95
Prov of Ontario Bond	2-Jun-2005	783,946	6.55
Sask Savings Bonds	15-Jul-2005	100,000	5.75
Prov of Ontario Bond	1-Dec-2005	293,116	6.01
Province of Nova Scotia	1-Jun-2006	229,512	4.11
Govt of Canada Strip Bond	1-Dec-2006	229,476	4.16
Province of Manitoba	5-Mar-2007	470,312	5.56
Province of Ontario	8-Mar-2007	229,743	4.24
Province of Newfoundland	17-Apr-2007	261,419	4.35
Province of Ontario	12-Sep-2007	261,491	4.35
Govt of Canada Strip Bond	1-Dec-2007	261,789	4.43
Province of British Columbia	9-Jun-2008	270,798	4.59
Sask Savings Bonds	15-Jul-2008	200,000	3.00
Province of Newfoundland	17-Apr-2009	416,632	4.12
Province of Ontario	19-Nov-2009	459,735	4.06
Province of Saskatchewan	18-Jan-2010	187,731	4.38
Ontario Hydro	11-Apr-2010	187,854	4.47
		5,134,987	
		$ 6,611,860	

(See accompanying notes to the financial statements)

SCHEDULE OF INTERNALLY RESTRICTED FUNDS

For the Year Ended March 31, 2004

The Foundation's financial commitments at March 31, 2004 were as follows:

YEAR	RESEARCH GRANTS (Note 2(b))	PARTNERSHIPS (Note 8)	SPHERU (Note 5(a))	RPP (Note 6)	TOTAL
2005	$ 1,189,726	$ 100,000	$ 201,859	$ 700,000	$ 2,191,585
2006	424,545	25,000	275,000	700,000	1,424,545
2007	124,000	0	275,000	0	399,000
2008	124,000	0	0	0	124,000
2009	100,000	0	0	0	100,000
	$ 1,962,271	$ 125,000	$ 751,859	$ 1,400,000	$ 4,239,130

(See accompanying notes to the financial statements)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

March 31, 2004

1. Establishment of the Foundation

On January 31, 2003, *The Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation Act* (S.S. 2002, c.S-21.1) came into force establishing the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation (Foundation). That act also repealed *The Health Services Utilization and Research Commission Act* (S.S. 1994, c.H-1.1), ending the Foundation's predecessor, the Health Services Utilization and Research Commission (HSURC). The Foundation is responsible for organizing, managing and allocating most provincial health research funding in Saskatchewan and for ensuring that supported research fits with the province's health research priorities and leads to benefits for health and the health system in Saskatchewan.

2. Accounting Policies

The Foundation maintains its accounts using Canadian generally accepted accounting principles including the following significant accounting policies:

a) Fund Accounting

The accounts of the Foundation are maintained in accordance with the principles of restricted fund accounting for contributions. For financial reporting purposes, accounts with similar characteristics have been combined into the following funds:

i) Operating Fund

The Operating Fund reflects the operations of the Foundation, including facilitating health research in the province and disseminating results of funded research. Revenue consists of provincial funds, interest and miscellaneous revenue. Expenses consist of research grants and awards, administrative costs, and core support for research centres (see note 7).

ii) Restricted Fund – HEALNet Research Project

The HEALNet Research Project Fund reflects unused funding that was retained by the Foundation for expenditures to complete the project. The project is now complete and the fund has been closed.

iii) Restricted Fund – Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit (SPHERU)

The SPHERU Fund reflects transfers from the Foundation and revenue from Saskatchewan Health. Expenses consist of grants to support research.

iv) Restricted Fund – Saskatchewan – Canadian Institutes of Health Research Regional Partnership Program (RPP)

The RPP Fund reflects transfers from the Foundation and revenue from Saskatchewan Health and Saskatchewan Industry and Resources. Expenses consist of research grants.

b) Research Grants

Annual Competitions

The Foundation holds annual competitions through which funds are awarded to successful applicants for terms of up to two years. The Foundation expenses the approved funds for each year of the grant, provided recipients meet eligibility criteria. Awarded amounts not paid or payable at year-end are recorded as commitments in Schedule 2.

The balance of funds advanced to administering institutions in excess of the current requirements of researchers is held in trust by those institutions until drawn down by the researchers. Funds not spent during the term of a research grant are treated as a recovery in the year that this is determined. These funds are then available to be awarded for future research.

c) Capital Assets

Capital assets are recorded at cost. Normal maintenance and repairs are expensed as incurred. Capital assets are amortized on a straight-line basis over their estimated useful lives (3 to 10 years).

d) Revenue

Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue in the Operating Fund in the year received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured. All other restricted contributions are recognized as revenue of the appropriate restricted fund.

e) Investments

Investments are valued at the lower of amortized cost or net realizable value.

3. Capital Assets

	2004			2003
	Cost	Accumulated Amortization	Net Book Value	Net Book Value
Furniture & Equipment	$ 52,539	$ 23,514	$ 29,025	$ 10,804

4. Commitments

At March 31, 2004, the Foundation had the following lease commitments:

	2005	2006	2007	2008
Office rent lease	$ 40,944	$ 40,944	$ 40,944	$ 18,766
Photocopier lease	1,443	1,443	361	
	$ 42,387	$ 42,387	$ 41,305	$ 18,766

5. Saskatchewan Population Health Evaluation and Research Unit (SPHERU) Fund

a) The Foundation carries on a ten-year financial commitment started in 1997-98 by the Health Services Utilization and Research Commission to support the establishment and development of SPHERU. The Foundation will provide $250,000 per year, plus interest of up to $25,000 per year, until the year 2006-07. The amount transferred during the year was higher due to an advance on next year's commitment (see Schedule 2).

An October 1999 memorandum of agreement governs the Foundation's payments to SPHERU research accounts at the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina, to undertake SPHERU-Board approved activities. Unused funding is retained by the Foundation for distribution in future years.

b) Starting in 1997-98, Saskatchewan Health also agreed to provide $250,000 per year for SPHERU. For the period 1999-00 to 2003-04, these funds were included in RPP (see note 6) but protected for SPHERU until year five of the program (2003-04). Per RPP advisory committee policy, the portion of these funds unused by SPHERU at the end of this fiscal year have been released for general RPP use and transferred to the RPP Fund.

6. Saskatchewan – Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) Regional Partnership Program (RPP) Fund

In 1999-2000, the provincial government agreed to provide matching funds for Saskatchewan researchers and research projects in conjunction with CIHR's Regional Partnership Program, with provincial funds matching CIHR funds on a 1:1 basis. In the current year, Saskatchewan Health, Saskatchewan Industry and Resources, and the Foundation contributed funds. The Foundation manages these funds, as outlined in initial correspondence with Saskatchewan Health and in a signed agreement with Saskatchewan Industry and Resources.

The current agreement ended March 31, 2004, with virtually all available funds committed to grants and awards being paid out in current and future years. CIHR has decided to extend the program for two more years, under the same terms and conditions, and the Foundation has decided to contribute matching funds for two more years.

7. Core-Funded Research Centres

As of April 1, 2003, Saskatchewan Health transferred funding responsibility for five research centres to the Foundation by increasing the operating revenue. Funding amounts and time commitments vary, as listed below. The Foundation is developing accountability agreements with each centre, including a requirement for reporting on funds spent and outlining future plans.

Research Centre	Annual $	Current Term
Canadian Centre for Analysis of Regionalization and Health, Saskatoon	100,000	03-04 to 05-06
Cancer Research Unit, Saskatchewan Cancer Agency	563,000	03-04 to 05-06
Indigenous Peoples' Health Research Centre, First Nations University of Canada	500,000	03-04 to 07-08
Institute of Agricultural, Rural and Environmental Health, Medicine, College of Medicine, University of Saskatchewan	250,000	03-04 to 05-06
Neuropsychiatry Research Unit (including Applied Research Unit), Psychiatry, College of Medicine, University of Saskatchewan	1,262,000	03-04 to 05-06

8. Partnerships

Periodically, the Foundation enters into funding partnerships, often spanning more than one year, to help achieve its goals and objectives. Current partnerships are described below, with corresponding future funding commitments listed in Schedule 2.

a) University Co-ordinator of Health Research (UCHR)

Under a November 1999 memo of understanding with the University of Saskatchewan transferred from HSURC, the Foundation contributes $100,000 per year for five years to support a University Co-ordinator of Health Research position. The current term expires June 30, 2005. The purpose of the position is to help the Foundation

build health research capacity and increase the success rates of Saskatchewan researchers in federal research competitions.

9. Related Party Transactions

Included in these financial statements are transactions with various Saskatchewan Crown Corporations, departments, agencies, boards and commissions related to the Foundation by virtue of common control by the Government of Saskatchewan, and non-Crown corporations and enterprises subject to joint control or significant influence by the Government of Saskatchewan (collectively referred to as "related parties").

Routine operating transactions with related parties are recorded at the standard rates charged by those organizations and are settled on normal trade terms. These transactions and amounts outstanding at year-end are as follows:

	2004	2003
Research grant, administrative and occupancy expenses:		
Capital Pension Plan - employee benefits	$ 10,573	$ 1,323
Health Quality Council	26	2,766
Saskatchewan Cancer Agency	563,000	—
Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation	46,692	7,693
Sask Tel	7,487	1,067
University of Regina	606,608	20,000
University of Saskatchewan	4,100,155	69,543
Other	1,512	609
Accounts payable	902	8,467
Grants payable	407,496	668,655
Accounts receivable	—	133,470

The Foundation pays Provincial Sales Tax to the Saskatchewan Department of Finance on all its taxable purchases. Taxes paid are recorded as part of the cost of those purchases.

Other transactions with related parties and amounts due to or from them are described separately in these financial statements and the notes thereto.

10. Financial Instruments

The Foundation has the following financial instruments: accrued interest receivable, accounts receivable, investments, accounts payable, and grants payable. The following paragraphs disclose the significant aspects of these financial instruments.

a) Significant terms and conditions

There are no significant terms and conditions associated with the financial instruments, other than investments, that may affect the amount, timing, and certainty of future cash flows. Significant terms and conditions for investments are described separately in these financial statements and the accompanying notes.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

March 31, 2004

b) Interest rate risk

The Foundation is exposed to interest rate risk when the value of its financial instruments fluctuates due to changes in market interest rates.

The Foundation's receivables and payables are non-interest bearing. Due to the short-term nature of these, as well as cash and short-term investments, interest rate risk is minimal.

As market interest rates fluctuate the market value of long-term investments moves in the opposite direction. This risk will affect the price the Foundation could sell the investments for prior to maturity.

c) Credit risk

The Foundation is exposed to credit risk from potential non-payment of accounts receivable or investment income and principal.

Most of the Foundation's receivables are from the provincial government; therefore the credit risk is minimal.

The Foundation's investments consist of provincial and federal government bonds, promissory notes, treasury bills and bankers acceptances with large Canadian banks. Therefore, credit risk for investments and related accrued interest receivable is minimal.

d) Fair Value

For the following financial instruments, the carrying amounts approximate fair value due to their immediate or short-term nature:

Accrued interest receivable
Accounts receivable
Short-term investments
Accounts payable
Grants payable

The fair value of long-term investments is $5,287,469. The fair value is considered to approximate quoted market values.

11. Budget

These amounts represent the operating budget approved by the Board on April 23, 2003.

12. Pension Plan

The Foundation is a participating employer in the Capital Pension Plan, a defined contribution pension plan. Eligible employees make monthly contributions of 5.5% of gross salary, which are matched by the Foundation. During the year, the Foundation's total contributions were $10,573.

13. Comparative Information

The Foundation commenced operations on February 1, 2003, therefore comparative information is based on 2 months of operation for the period ending March 31, 2003.

VALUES

Values

We believe health research ...
- is the ethical search for truth, knowledge, and understanding about human health;
- is an investment that leads to benefits for all Saskatchewan residents in many areas, including health, education and the economy;
- includes both basic and applied research; and
- encompasses many dimensions, including biomedical science, clinical investigation, health services and systems research, and research into the determinants of population health.

We are committed to good governance, including ...
- good stewardship for the resources entrusted to us; and
- the highest standards of public accountability.

We will maintain the highest standards of professional conduct, including ...
- integrity and honesty;
- respect for diverse perspectives and approaches; and
- clear, open, honest and timely communication.

We will work co-operatively and collaboratively with others to ...
- achieve mutual goals related to advancing health research in Saskatchewan; and
- ensure research findings are shared and used as widely as possible.

We strive for excellence and innovation in all our endeavours.

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Health Research
FOUNDATION

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